

Act, and the PACE Energy Act will go a long way toward meeting America's rising demand for highly skilled men and women in all fields of innovation, and it will strengthen America's security through energy independence.

Fifth, and finally, I conclude where we must begin, with a clear, unequivocal expression of national commitment, a new Declaration of Independence, if you will, matched with the discipline to keep us on track, according to an agreed-upon timetable. For those who say we cannot come together for such a national purpose, I say you underestimate the character and the resolve of the American people and the power of the American idea.

Look at what we have done in the past when confronted with great challenges to our freedom and our way of life. Half a century ago, the Soviet Union launched the space satellite Sputnik. Our scientific edge in missile technology and the space race was in serious doubt. Our national security was at great risk of falling behind. But America's ingenuity was dramatically and urgently mobilized by President Eisenhower, who passed the National Defense Education Act, providing massive investment in science, technology, and engineering.

We need that same kind of commitment and leadership to keep America the world capital of innovation now and in the future.

September 11 awakened our Nation to a monumental new challenge: fighting and winning this global war against hate-filled terrorists. This war on terror, similar to all wars, will require clarity of vision and unity of purpose. America's long-term national security depends on securing our independence from the Middle East and other hostile sources of oil. We have the resources to do it, the resources underneath our land and water, and the best resource of all, the ingenuity of our free, creative minds. Now we just need the willpower to use it.

Mr. President, 230 years ago our forebears pledged their lives, their fortune, and their sacred honor to the cause of independence. We are more fortunate. We need only do what we have already sworn to do—set aside our differences and act in the public interest. This Congress must adopt a clear “Declaration of Independence” from the Middle East and other hostile sources of oil, and it must act urgently, decisively, and with a unity that rises above partisan differences to make that Declaration of Independence a reality.

Let us begin right now.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for about 20 or 25 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE PHASE II REPORT

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence has released to the public two of the five sections of our long-promised report on how intelligence was used by policymakers in the lead-up to the war in Iraq. This phase II report builds on the committee's July 2003 phase I report on the intelligence community's very substantial mistakes regarding weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Fundamentally, these reports are about accountability. They are about identifying the mistakes that led us to war and making sure those mistakes never happen again, so far as we can do so.

Let me share some important excerpts from the report which reflect both my own views and the views of all of my Democratic colleagues on the committee.

The committee's investigation into prewar intelligence on Iraq has revealed that the Bush administration's case for war in Iraq was fundamentally misleading.

Prior to the war, administration officials repeatedly characterized Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs in more conclusive and threatening terms than were substantiated by the underlying intelligence assessments. Analytical assessments of the intelligence community that were not in line with the more strident administration view on alleged Iraqi links to al-Qaida and the 9/11 plot were ignored and were denigrated by senior policymakers. Most disturbingly, the administration, in its zeal to promote public opinion in the United States before toppling Saddam Hussein, pursued a deceptive strategy prior to the war of using intelligence reporting that the intelligence community warned was uncorroborated, unreliable, and, in critical instances, fabricated.

The committee has uncovered information in its investigation which shows that the administration ignored warnings prior to the war about the veracity of the intelligence trumpeted publicly to support its case that Iraq was an imminent threat to the security of the United States.

Some of the false information used to support the invasion of Iraq was provided by the Iraqi National Congress, the INC, an organization which our intelligence agencies had cautioned repeatedly was penetrated by hostile intelligence services and would use its relationship with the United States to promote its own agenda to overthrow Saddam Hussein. The committee's investigation concluded that the INC attempted to influence U.S. policy on

Iraq by providing false information through Iraqi defectors directed at convincing the United States that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction and had links to terrorists.

The committee also found the July 2002 decision by the National Security Council directing that the renewed funding of the INC contract—the Iraqi National Congress, the Chalabi operation—be put under Pentagon management was ill advised given the counterintelligence concerns of the CIA and warnings of financial mismanagement from the State Department.

Repeated prewar statements by administration officials sought to connect Iraq and al-Qaida in ways the underlying intelligence simply did not support.

The administration's—this is key—the administration's repeated allegations of the past, present, and future relationship between al-Qaida and Iraq exploited the deep sense of insecurity among Americans in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks, leading a large majority of Americans to believe, contrary to the intelligence assessments at the time, that Iraq had a role in the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The administration sought and succeeded in creating the impression that al-Qaida and Iraq worked in concert and presented a single unified threat to the United States of America. The committee's investigation revealed something completely different.

The committee found that there was no credible information that Iraq was complicit or had foreknowledge of the September 11 attacks or any other al-Qaida strike anywhere. The committee also found that Iraq did not provide chemical or biological weapons training or any material or operational support to al-Qaida prior to the war.

Furthermore, no evidence was found of any meeting between al-Qaida and the Iraq regime before the war, other than a single meeting that took place years earlier in 1995, in fact, in the Sudan. That meeting was at a fairly low level, and that meeting did not lead to any operational cooperation at all. Osama was there, but the Iraqi representative was at a low level.

Key pieces of evidence used by the administration asserting links between Iraq and al-Qaida were a report of a meeting in Prague between 9/11 hijacker Mohamed Atta and an Iraqi intelligence officer and a claim that Iraq provided chemical and biological weapons training to al-Qaida in the late 1990s. The committee report demonstrates that the prewar statements of the Vice President of the United States that the Prague meeting had been “pretty well confirmed” and that the 9/11 hijacker Mohamed Atta—again the Vice President's words—“in fact” met with Iraqi intelligence services in 2001 were not substantiated by the intelligence assessment at the time the statements were made by the Vice President. Likewise, the statement by National Security Adviser Rice that

“there are a lot of tantalizing meetings” between Iraq and “people who were involved in 9/11” was clearly false based upon what was known prior to the war.

The committee’s investigation revealed no postwar information indicating that Iraq considered using al-Qaida or any other terrorist group to attack the United States. The committee investigation concluded that, in fact, Saddam Hussein was distrustful of al-Qaida and viewed Islamic extremists as a threat to his regime and to him personally, refusing all requests from al-Qaida to provide material or any kind of operational support. Postwar findings indicate that Saddam Hussein refused all al-Qaida overtures for material or operational support and, in fact, issued a general order that Iraq should not deal with al-Qaida. In addition, Saddam viewed al-Zarqawi, who was present in Baghdad only from May to November of 2002, as an outlaw. Saddam regarded Zarqawi as an outlaw and attempted unsuccessfully to locate him and capture him. Again, he failed.

During the buildup to war, the intelligence community was placed under pressure to support the administration’s position that there was a link between Iraq and al-Qaida. This is particularly distressing. This pressure took the form of policymakers repetitively tasking analysts to review, to reconsider, to revise their analytical judgments, or simply asking the same question again and again.

Many participants involved with the preparation of prewar intelligence felt at the time that the decision had been made to go to war by the administration early on—in fact, many months before Congress was asked to authorize the use of force. The committee investigation revealed evidence that this prewar pressure to conform to administration policy demands may have led to the co-option of the intelligence community.

The committee’s two-phased investigation has been significantly limited. I must say, by the majority’s refusal to examine issues and documents relative to our inquiry when the issues and documents came close to the White House.

While a quarter of the committee’s INC report is devoted to a lengthy examination of the CIA’s relationship with the INC in the early and mid-1990s, the committee majority voted down requests by the minority to investigate the flow of intelligence information from the INC that circumvented the intelligence community and went directly to the White House and to Pentagon policy officials in the lead-up to the war.

Finally, the committee’s inquiry has been hampered by the decision to deal with five phase II tasks as separate inquiries, which they are not, and complete the report on a piecemeal basis rather than a unified whole. This has been distressing to those of us in the minority.

The chairman suspended the committee investigation into the Pentagon

policy office—we associate the name Doug Fife with that—over 2 years ago, rejected any investigation, oversight—whatever you will—into the Pentagon policy office despite evidence presented in the committee’s phase I report that the office attempted to shape the CIA’s terrorism analysis, and when it failed, prepared an alternative intelligence analysis for policy officials designed to denigrate the CIA’s analysis for not embracing a link between Iraq and al-Qaida and the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It is my belief that the committee can complete its remaining work on phase II of its Iraq inquiry in a manner that is complete, objective, and expeditious. It should not have taken nearly 3 years to reach the point where we are now.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to proceed as in morning business for 25 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are in morning business. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. I understand it is for 10 minutes unless we get unanimous consent for more time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senator is recognized for 25 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, let me begin by thanking the Senator from West Virginia for the leadership he has shown on this matter and so many other matters—on every matter he has touched on, in fact, on intelligence and in his other work in this body.

Today the Senate Intelligence Committee is releasing two of five parts of phase II of the committee’s inquiry into prewar intelligence. One of the two reports released today looks at what we learned after the attack on Iraq about the accuracy of prewar intelligence regarding links between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaida. Today’s report is a devastating indictment of the Bush administration’s unrelenting, misleading, and deceptive attempts to convince the American people that Saddam Hussein was linked with al-Qaida, the perpetrators of the 9/11 attack.

The President said Wednesday, just this week, that:

One of the hardest parts of my job is to connect Iraq to the war on terror.

Well, that shouldn’t surprise anybody. The President’s decision to ignore intelligence community assessments prior to the Iraq war and to make repeated public statements that gave the misleading impression that Saddam Hussein’s regime was connected to the terrorists who attacked us on 9/11 cost him any credibility he may have had on this issue.

President Bush said Saddam and al-Qaida were allies—his words. And that:

You can’t distinguish between al-Qaida and Saddam when you talk about the war on terror.

The bipartisan report released today directly contradicts that linkage which

the President has consistently made in his effort to build public support for his Iraq policy.

The bipartisan committee report finds that the prewar intelligence assessments were right when the intelligence community said Saddam and al-Qaida were independent actors who were far from being natural partners. The report finds that prewar intelligence assessments were right when they expressed consistent doubts that a meeting occurred between 9/11 hijacker Mohamed Atta and a senior Iraqi intelligence official in Prague prior to September 11. Our report finds that prewar intelligence assessments were right when they said there was no credible reporting on al-Qaida operatives being trained in Iraq. Those were the two principal arguments which were used prior to the war to support the alleged linkage between al-Qaida and Saddam Hussein.

The accurate prewar intelligence assessments didn’t stop the administration from making many false and misleading statements trying to link Saddam Hussein with al-Qaida. In his September 5 presentation to the United Nations, Secretary Powell said:

Iraq today harbors a deadly terrorist network headed by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an associate and collaborator of Osama bin Laden, and his al-Qaida lieutenant.

After the war, in June of 2004, the President said that al-Zarqawi, the terrorist leader recently killed in Iraq, was the best evidence of a connection between Iraq and al-Qaida. And to this day—to this day—these statements have not stopped.

Just 2 weeks ago, the President said in a press conference that Saddam Hussein “had relations with Zarqawi.” Our Intelligence Committee report demonstrates that statement made 2 weeks ago by the President was false. The committee report discloses, for the first time, the CIA’s October 2005 assessment that Saddam’s regime:

Did not have a relationship, harbor, or turn a blind eye towards Zarqawi and his associates.

The President’s statement made just 2 weeks ago is flatout false.

The drumbeat of misleading administration statements alleging Saddam’s links to al-Qaida was unrelenting in the lead-up to the Iraq war which began in March of 2003.

On September 25, 2002, the President said:

Al-Qaida hides. Saddam doesn’t, but the danger is that they work in concert. The danger is that al-Qaida becomes an extension of Saddam’s madness and his hatred and his capacity to extend weapons of mass destruction around the world.

And then he said:

You can’t distinguish between al-Qaida and Saddam when you talk about the war on terror.

The next day, in September of 2002, Secretary Rumsfeld said:

We have what we consider to be credible evidence that al-Qaida’s leaders have sought contacts in Iraq who would help them acquire weapons of mass destruction capabilities.

On October 14, 2002, the President said:

This is a man—Saddam is a man that we know has had connections with al-Qaida. This is a man who, in my judgment, would like to use al-Qaida as a forward army.

On January 30, 2003, Vice President CHENEY said:

Saddam's regime aids and protects terrorists, including members of al-Qaida. He could decide secretly to provide weapons of mass destruction to terrorists for use against us. And as the President said on Tuesday it would just take one vial, one canister, one crate to bring a day of horror to our Nation unlike any we have ever known.

On February 6, 2003, Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz said:

And, worst of all, his connections with terrorists which go back decades and which started some 10 years ago with al-Qaida are growing every day.

What the administration and the President and other administration officials did not say was what the intelligence community was saying about this crucial issue because it would have undermined their march to war and it would have refuted their main argument for attacking Iraq: that Iraq was linked to the terrorists who attacked us on 9/11.

What was the CIA saying? What was the intelligence community saying before the war? In June of 2002, the CIA said that:

Our assessment of al-Qaida's ties to Iraq rests on a body of fragmented, conflicting reporting from sources of varying reliability.

That same report of the CIA said:

The ties between Saddam and bin Laden appear much like those between rival intelligence services.

And the Defense Intelligence Agency stated in a July 2002 assessment, being declassified for this first time in this report:

Compelling evidence demonstrating direct cooperation between the government of Iraq and al-Qaida has not been established.

So these two then-classified assessments preceded the President's statements that "You can't distinguish between Iraq and al-Qaida" and that, in his view, Saddam would love to use al-Qaida as a "forward army."

Then the CIA assessed in January 2003, still before the war, that "Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden are far from being natural partners" and that Saddam has "viewed Islamic extremists operating inside Iraq as a threat."

The CIA assessed in January of 2003 that Saddam viewed al-Qaida with "deep suspicion" and stated that:

The relationship between Saddam and bin Laden appears to more closely resemble that of two independent actors trying to exploit each other.

That 2003 classified report was issued 1 day before the Vice President stated to the American public that Saddam's regime:

Aids and protects terrorists, including members of al-Qaida.

The misleading statements by administration officials didn't stop there. The Intelligence Committee report re-

counts the story of the alleged meeting between Mohamed Atta and the Iraqi intelligence officer in Prague. In the fall of 2001, the Czech intelligence service provided the CIA with reporting based on a single source who stated that Atta met with an Iraqi intelligence officer in Prague in April of 2001.

On December 9, 2001, Vice President CHENEY was asked about the report on "Meet the Press." The Vice President said:

It has been pretty well confirmed that he—

The 9/11 hijacker Mohamed Atta—

did go to Prague and he did meet with a senior official with the Iraqi intelligence service in Czechoslovakia last April, several months before the attack.

On March 24, 2002, the Vice President told "Meet the Press":

We discovered, and it has since been public, the allegation that one of the lead hijackers, Mohammed Atta, had, in fact, met with Iraqi intelligence in Prague.

But the Intelligence Committee report released today cites a June 2002 CIA paper that said:

Reporting is contradictory on hijacker Mohammed Atta's alleged trip to Prague and meeting with an Iraqi intelligence officer and we have not verified his travels.

The Intelligence Committee report released today declassifies, for the first time, a July 2002 Defense Intelligence Agency paper that said:

Mohammed Atta reportedly was identified by an asset, not an officer, of a Czech service, only after Atta's picture was widely circulated in the media after the attacks, approximately five months after the alleged meeting occurred.

And that:

There is no photographic, immigration, or other documentary evidence indicating that Atta was in the Czech Republic during the time frame of the meeting.

Two months later, in September 2002, the CIA published its assessment that "evidence casts doubt" on the possibility that the meeting had occurred and that:

The CIA and FBI have reviewed the reporting available so far and they are unable to confirm that Atta met al-Ani in Prague.

None of those assessments stopped the Vice President from continuing to suggest that the report of the meeting was evidence that Saddam's regime was linked to the 9/11 attack.

On September 8, 2002, in a "Meet the Press" interview, the Vice President said that the CIA considered the report of the meeting credible, although again, that same month, the CIA said there was evidence that cast doubt on it having occurred.

In January 2003, the CIA published an assessment stating that:

A CIA and FBI review of intelligence and open-source reporting leads us to question the information provided by the Czech service source who claimed that Atta met al-Ani.

The January 2003 paper stated that the CIA was "increasingly skeptical"—increasingly skeptical—"that Atta traveled to Prague in 2001 or met with the IIS officer, al-Ani," and that "the

most reliable reporting to date casts doubt on this possibility."

But the Vice President was undeterred by the CIA's skepticism. On September 14, 2003, 8 months after the CIA said that the most reliable reporting cast doubt on the possibility of a meeting between Atta and the Iraqi intelligence officer, Vice President CHENEY was still citing as this having possibly occurred.

On January 14, 2004, a full year after the CIA expressed serious doubts about the meeting and the fact that not a shred of evidence had been found to support the claim of a meeting, the Vice President told the Rocky Mountain News that the Atta meeting was "the one that possibly tied the two together to 9/11."

Six months later, on June 17, 2004, the Vice President was asked whether Iraq was involved in 9/11. The Vice President said, "We don't know. . . . We had one report, this was the famous report on the Czech intelligence service, and we've never been able to confirm it or knock it down. We just don't know."

The Vice President may not have "known," but the intelligence community sure as heck did not believe, and did not believe for a long time before the Vice President's statement, that the meeting took place.

The intelligence assessments contained in the Intelligence Committee's unclassified report are an indictment of the administration's unrelenting and misleading attempts to link Saddam Hussein to 9/11. But portions of the report which the intelligence community leaders have determined to keep from public view provide some of the most damaging evidence of this administration's falsehoods and distortions.

Among what remains classified, and therefore covered up, includes deeply disturbing information. Much of the information redacted from the public report does not jeopardize any intelligence source or method but serves effectively to cover up certain highly offensive activities. Even the partially released picture is plenty bleak, about the administration's use of falsehoods and distortions to build public support for the war. But the public is entitled to the full picture. Unless this report is further declassified, they won't get it. While the battle is waged to declassify those covered-up portions of the report—unless, of course, those portions truly disclose intelligence sources or methods, every Senator should read the classified version of this report. It is available to every Senator, and I urge every Senator to read the classified version of this report and reach his own conclusion about what I and Senator ROCKEFELLER have said about the portions of this report that remain classified and unavailable to the public.

In addition to trying to create the impression that Iraq was connected to the 9/11 attackers, the administration also claimed that Iraq had provided al-

Qaida with training in poisons and gases. For instance, in a speech on October 2002, the President said, "We've learned that Iraq has trained al-Qaida members in bomb making and poisons and deadly gases."

In February, 2003, the President said, "Iraq has also provided al-Qaida with chemical and biological weapons training."

In March of 2003, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice said there was a "very strong link to training al-Qaida in chemical and biological weapons techniques, we know from a detainee that—the head of training for al-Qaida, that they sought help in developing chemical and biological weapons because they weren't doing very well on their own. They sought it in Iraq. They received the help."

Those statements were based on representations of Ibn al Shaykh al-Libi, a detained senior al-Qaida operative. But what the administration hid was the fact that the Defense Intelligence Agency did not believe al-Libi's statement. In February 2002, a year before the President claimed that Iraq "provided al-Qaida with chemical and biological weapons training," the DIA assessed that al-Libi "is more likely . . . intentionally misleading the debriefers."

Nor did the administration disclose a second DIA assessment in February of 2002 that said, "Iraq is unlikely to have provided bin Ladin any useful CB knowledge or assistance," or DIA's April 2000 assessment that there was no credible reporting on al-Qaida training "anywhere" in Iraq.

The administration's statements also flew in the face of the CIA's January 2003 assessment that al-Libi was not in a position to know whether training had taken place.

So here is what we have. The President still says that Saddam had a relationship with Zarqawi. The Senate Intelligence Committee found that the intelligence community, in 2005, concluded that "the regime did not have a relationship with, harbor, or turn a blind eye towards Zarqawi."

The President said that Saddam and al Qaida were "allies." The intelligence community found that intelligence shows that Saddam Hussein "viewed Islamic extremists as a threat to his regime," and, indeed, as postwar intelligence shows, he, Saddam, "refused all requests from al-Qaida to provide material or operational support."

The Vice President called the claim that lead hijacker Mohammed Atta met with the Iraqi intelligence officer "credible" and "pretty much confirmed," but the Intelligence Committee report finds that the intelligence shows "no such meeting occurred."

The President said that Iraq provided training in poisons and gases to al-Qaida, but the Intelligence Committee finds that postwar intelligence supports prewar assessments that there was no credible reporting on al-Qaida

training "anywhere" in Iraq and that the terrorist who made the claim of training was "likely intentionally misleading his debriefers" when he said that Iraq had provided poisons and gases training.

But the administration's efforts to create the false impression that Iraq and al-Qaida were linked didn't stop with just statements. One of the most significant disclosures of the Intelligence Committee report is the account of the administration's successful efforts to obtain the support of CIA Director George Tenet to help them make that false case. The events were of major significance. They go to the heart of the administration's case for war on the eve of a congressional vote on whether to authorize that war. Here is what happened.

On October 7, 2002, in a speech in Cincinnati, the President represented that linkage existed between Saddam and terrorist groups. He said that "Iraq could decide on any given day to provide a biological or chemical weapon to a terrorist group or an individual terrorist."

But on that very day, October 7, 2002, in a letter to Intelligence Committee Chairman Bob Graham, the CIA declassified at the request of the committee the CIA assessment that it would be an "extreme step" for Saddam Hussein to assist Islamic terrorists in conducting a weapons-of-mass-destruction attack against the United States and that the likelihood of Saddam Hussein using weapons of mass destruction if he did not feel threatened by an attack was "low."

When made public, the CIA assessment would have undercut the President's case. Something had to be done. So on October 8, 2002, the Director of Central Intelligence, George Tenet, issued a statement that "there is no inconsistency between our view of Saddam's growing threat and the view expressed by the President in his speech."

The Tenet statement was aimed at damage control and it undercut the CIA's own crucial assessment at a critical moment. The New York Times quoted Tenet prominently in a major story on October 9.

We called Tenet before the Intelligence Committee a month and a half ago, on July 26, 2006. In his testimony, quoted in the Intelligence Committee's report, Mr. Tenet admitted that perhaps there was an inconsistency between the President's statement and the CIA's assessment. Mr. Tenet said he issued his statement denying the inconsistency after policymakers expressed concern about the CIA's assessment, as expressed in the declassified October 7 letter. Again, that letter saying that it would be an extreme step for Saddam to assist Islamic terrorists in conducting a weapons-of-mass destruction attack.

I ask for an additional 3 minutes, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. Tenet admitted to the intelligence subcommittee that the policymakers wanted him to "say something about not being inconsistent with what the President had said." Tenet complied.

Tenet acknowledged to the committee, in his July 26, 2006, testimony, that issuing the statement was "the wrong thing to do."

It was much more than that. It was a shocking abdication of a CIA Director's duty not to act as a shill for any administration or its policies. Director Tenet issued that statement at the behest of the administration on the eve of the Congress's debate on the resolution authorizing the use of force in Iraq. The use of the Director of Central Intelligence by the administration to contradict his own agency's assessment in order to support a policy goal of the administration is reprehensible, and it seriously damaged the credibility of the CIA.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair for its indulgence and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks recognition?

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent we stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, at 12:42 p.m., the Senate recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 1:14 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. ALLEN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I apologize for keeping you and the staff longer than you should have been, but I was unable to be here until just now. So thank you all very much for waiting for me.

SENATE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, at noon today, the Senate Intelligence Committee released a report that proved evidence of two things: first, the Bush administration's case for war in Iraq was fundamentally misleading and deceptive and not supported by the underlying intelligence; second, the Republican-controlled Senate Intelligence Committee continues to put the political interests of the Bush White House ahead of the security of the American people.

According to today's report, the Bush administration desperately sought to prove a link between Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden in order to shore up public assertions being made by the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, and other senior administration officials. But from this report which was made public today, at noon, we know these assertions directly contradicted the best assessments of our intelligence experts. In